

Australian Survey of Reasons for COVID-19 Vaccination – Results for Victoria

This national survey was promoted by various influencers during the period 18th February to 28th March 2022. Although all Federal MPs and Senators were told about the survey and asked to share the link, and press releases were sent to mainstream media outlets, only certain media outlets actively promoted the survey. These included the Reignite Democracy Australia website, George Christensen MP's Facebook page, Craig Kelly MP's Telegram channel, Senator Malcolm Roberts' Facebook and Telegram, and David Limbrick MP (VIC)'s Facebook page.

It's important to thus recognise that, despite efforts to make it nationally representative, the survey tapped into a particular political demographic and so is not likely to be fully representative of the Australian population. This also means that percentages and proportions calculated from the survey responses of Victorians should not be applied to the whole state of Victoria.

However, it is also important to recognise that the absolute numbers *can* be used – and the survey data provides evidence that thousands of Victorians felt pressured into vaccination, often “choosing” to get vaccinated under the threat of losing their employment if they did not.

Here are the Victorian results, question by question:

1. Which Federal electoral division are you in

A total of 7,319 Victorians completed the survey. Responses were received from people in all 38 Victorian Federal electoral divisions. The largest number of responses were recorded by people from Casey (592 responses) and the smallest number were received from people in Fraser (69 responses).

2. What is your sex?

Answer	Responses	Percentage
Male	3,104	42.4%
Female	4,177	57.1%
Other	38	0.5%
Total	7,319	100%

3. What age group are you in?

Answer	Responses	Percentage
5-17 years	22	0.3%
18-29 years	487	6.7%
30-39 years	1,456	19.9%
40-59 years	3,904	53.3%
60-79 years	1,411	19.3%
80 years and over	39	0.5%
Total	7,319	100%

4. How many COVID-19 vaccination doses have you had?

Answer	Responses	Percentage
I have not had any doses of a COVID-19 vaccination	3,905	53.4%
I have had 1 dose of a COVID-19 vaccination	293	4.0%
I have had 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccination	2,368	32.4%
I have had 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccination plus one or more booster doses	749	10.2%
Total	7,315	100.00%

In total 3,410 Victorian survey responders had had at least one dose of the vaccine, and 3,905 Victorians who had not been vaccinated also completed the survey. Thus, 47% of the respondents were vaccinated and 53% were not vaccinated.

Of those vaccinated, 9% had had only one dose, 69% had had two doses and 22%, three or more doses.

Questions 5 to 8 were only for people who had been vaccinated. Question 5 is not reported here – it asked for all the reasons people got vaccinated and the results were very similar to those for Q6.

6. What was your MAIN REASON for deciding to have a first COVID-19 vaccine dose?

Answer	Responses	Percentage
To keep my job	1,346	40.3%
It was mandated for my job or profession	689	20.6%
Other (Please specify) [note, these are listed in a separate document]	151	4.5%
To protect me from getting COVID-19	139	4.2%
To allow me to travel (within my state, interstate or overseas)	132	4.0%
I felt it was important to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the community	113	3.4%
To allow me to enter my place of work	107	3.2%
So I could attend a public event such as a restaurant, wedding or sport	96	2.9%
So that I could get out of lockdown restrictions	81	2.4%
I thought it was the right thing to do	66	2.0%
To enable me to go into shops and businesses	50	1.5%
My family or friends pressured me to have it	49	1.5%
To enable me to take my children to activities or to enter their school	41	1.2%
I wanted to visit elderly or vulnerable friends or relatives without putting them at risk of COVID-19	40	1.2%
I was afraid of getting severe COVID-19	30	0.9%
So that I could join in social gatherings with my friends or family	26	0.8%
I felt at high risk of severe COVID-19 because I have an existing health condition	24	0.7%

I felt at high risk of severe COVID-19 because of my age	23	0.7%
To enable me to have a medical treatment or surgery or to attend medical appointments for myself	22	0.7%
To enable me to visit family members in hospital or to accompany them to medical appointments	<u>21</u>	0.6%
To help us to reach a target level of vaccination at which lockdown restrictions would be eased	21	0.6%
I live or work with vulnerable people and I wanted to protect them from catching COVID-19	20	0.6%
So that I could participate in a club or team activity or work as a volunteer	20	0.6%
So that I could attend school, college, or university	15	0.4%
My family or friends encouraged me to have it	11	0.3%
To enable me to have IVF treatment (in vitro fertilisation)	5	0.1%
I was given money or another incentive to have the vaccine	1	0.0%
	3,339	100.0%

A key take-home message here is that, for 2,035 Victorians, the main reason for getting vaccinated was nothing to do with protection from COVID-19. They got vaccinated to keep their jobs – often because of a mandate.

7. Did you feel you were put under any pressure to have any of your doses of a COVID-19 vaccination? Please answer on a scale from 0 to 4 where 0 is no pressure at all and 4 is extreme pressure

Answer	Responses	Percentage
0 - I felt no pressure to have a COVID-19 vaccination	323	9.5%
1 - I felt slightly pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	62	1.8%
2 - I felt moderately pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	92	2.7%
3 - I felt very pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	228	6.7%
4 - I felt extremely pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	2,679	79.2%
	3,384	100.0%

Hence 2,907 Victorians said they felt either very or extremely pressured to be vaccinated. This is contrary the requirements for legally valid consent given in the Australian Immunisation Handbook. This states:

“For consent to be legally valid, the following elements must be present: ... 2. It must be given voluntarily in the absence of undue pressure, coercion or manipulation.”

<https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/contents/vaccination-procedures/preparing-for-vaccination#valid-consent>

8. What are your current feelings about having a further COVID-19 vaccination (for example a second dose or booster)?

Answer	Responses	Percentage
I will willingly take another COVID-19 vaccination dose if advised to do so	345	10.1%
I am less willing to take another COVID-19 vaccination dose	99	2.9%
I am reluctant to have further COVID-19 vaccination doses	639	18.8%
I intend to refuse any further COVID-19 vaccination doses	2,317	68.1%
	3,400	100.0%

9. This question is only for people who have not had any vaccination doses.

Do you currently feel under any pressure to have a COVID-19 vaccination?

Please answer on a scale from 0 to 4 where 0 is no pressure at all and 4 is extreme pressure

Answer	Responses	Percentage
0 - I feel no pressure to have a COVID-19 vaccination	497	12.7%
1 - I feel slightly pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	272	7.0%
2 - I feel moderately pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	414	10.6%
3 - I feel very pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	643	16.5%
4 - I feel extremely pressured to have a COVID-19 vaccination	2,081	53.3%
	3,907	100.0%

Hence this question provides evidence that, in February and March of 2022, 2,724 Victorians who had not been vaccinated felt under either very or extreme pressure to get vaccinated.

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